CLAIMS:

1. A system for retrieving data from a source
2 computer coupled to a network, comprising:

a low-speed path linking a requesting terminal
4 with the network;

a high-speed path linking the requesting
6 terminal with the network; and

selection means for selecting one of the low-
8 speed path and the high-speed path for transmission
of data from the source computer to the requesting
10 terminal.

2. The system of claim 1, wherein the low-
2 speed path comprises a terrestrial link.

3. The system of claim 2, wherein the
2 terrestrial link comprises a serial port in the
requesting terminal in communication with a PPP
4 provider connected to the network.

4. The system of claim 3, wherein the serial
2 port communicates with the PPP provider via a modem.

5. The system of claim 1, wherein the low-
2 speed path comprises a two-way link between the
requesting terminal and the network.

6.   The system of claim 1, wherein the

2   requesting terminal requests data from the source

computer via the low-speed path.

7.   The system of claim 1, wherein the high-

2   speed path comprises a satellite link.

8.   The system of claim 1, wherein the high-

2   speed path comprises a one-way link from the source

computer to the requesting terminal.

9.   The system of claim 1, wherein the high-

2   speed path comprises a gateway connected to the

network and data retrieved from the source computer

4   is provided to the gateway via the network and

transmitted to the requesting terminal via a

6   satellite link.

10.   The system of claim 1, wherein the

2   requesting terminal includes application software

for generating a data request packet for

4   transmission from the requesting terminal to the

source computer.

11. The system of claim 10, wherein the
2 selection means comprises a driver for receiving the
data request packet from the application software
4 and modifying the request packet to specify one of
the low-speed path and the high-speed path for
6 transmission of data from the source computer.

12. The system of claim 11, wherein the
2 request packet is an IP packet including a
destination address and a source address and the
4 driver specifies the low-speed path by changing the
source address to correspond to the low-speed path.

13. The system of claim 11, wherein the
2 request packet is an IP packet including a
destination address and a source address and the
4 driver specifies the high-speed path by tunneling
the packet.

14. The system of claim 11, wherein the
2 selection means further comprises a user interface
in the requesting terminal that allows a user to
4 specify an application to use the low-speed path.

15. The system of claim 14, wherein the driver
2 modifies the request packet to specify one of the
low-speed path and the high-speed path based on the
4 user's specification.

16. A system for retrieving data from a source
2 computer coupled to a network, comprising:

a requesting terminal for requesting data to be
4 retrieved from the source computer, wherein the
requesting terminal includes

6 a terrestrial interface coupled to the
network;

8 a satellite interface capable of receiving
data transmitted via a satellite link, wherein the
10 satellite link includes a gateway coupled to the
network, and

12 means for designating that the requested data
be transmitted from the source computer to the
14 requesting terminal through one of the terrestrial
interface and the satellite interface.

17. The system of claim 16, wherein the
2 requesting terminal transmits a request packet to
the source computer through the terrestrial
4 interface.

18.   The system of claim 17, wherein the
2   request packet includes a destination address
corresponding to the source computer and a source
4   address corresponding to the satellite interface.

19.   The system of claim 17, wherein the
2   designating means comprises a driver that modifies
the request packet to specify one of the terrestrial
4   interface and the satellite interface.

20.   The system of claim 19, wherein the driver
2   specifies the terrestrial interface by changing the
source address of the request packet to the
4   terrestrial interface.

21.   The system of claim 19, wherein the driver
2   specifies the satellite interface by adding a new
destination address corresponding to the gateway and
4   a new source address corresponding to the
terrestrial interface to the request packet.

22.   The system of claim 17, wherein the
2   designating means comprises the gateway which
modifies the destination address of the request
4   packet to correspond to the terrestrial interface.

23. The system of claim 17, wherein the

2   designating means automatically designates that the

requested data be transmitted through the

4   terrestrial interface when the request packet

corresponds to a streaming application.

24. The system of claim 16, wherein the

2   designating means automatically designates that the

requested data be transmitted through the

4   terrestrial interface when the satellite link

malfunctions.

25. The system of claim 16, wherein the

2   designating means automatically designates that the

requested data be transmitted through the

4   terrestrial interface when the satellite link is

congested.

26. A method of retrieving data from a source

2   computer coupled to a network, comprising the steps

of:

4   generating, at a requesting terminal, a request

packet for transmission of data from the source

6   computer;

        designating, at the requesting terminal, a

8   transmission path selected from one of a low-speed

path and a high-speed path for transmission of the

10   requested data from the source computer to the

requesting terminal;

12   providing the designated data request to the

source computer, wherein the source computer

14   generates a data reply; and

        receiving the data reply from the source

16   computer via the designated transmission path.

27. The method of claim 26, wherein the step

2   of designating a transmission path further comprises

the step of modifying the request packet.

28. The method of claim 26, wherein the low-

2   speed path comprises a terrestrial link and the

high-speed path comprises a satellite link.

29. The method of claim 28, wherein the
2 requesting terminal provides the designated data
request to the source computer via the terrestrial
4 link.

30. The method of claim 28, wherein the step
2 of designating the transmission path further
comprises the step of specifying an application to
4 use one of the terrestrial path or the satellite
path.

31. The method of claim 28, wherein the
2 terrestrial link comprises:
a link between the requesting terminal and a
4 PPP provider;
a link between the PPP provider and the
6 network; and
a link between the network and the source
8 computer.

32. The method of claim 28, wherein the

2 satellite link comprises:

a link between the source computer and the

4 network;

a link between the network and a gateway;

6 and

a satellite connection between the gateway

8 and the requesting terminal.

33. A system for retrieving data from a source

2 computer coupled to a network, comprising:

a two-way, low-speed terrestrial path linking

4 a requesting terminal with the network;

a one-way, high-speed satellite path linking

6 the requesting terminal with the network; and

selection means for selecting one of the

8 terrestrial path and the satellite path for

transmission of data from the source computer to the

10 requesting terminal.

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